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C.I.A. STUDY ASSESSES SOVIET CIVIL DEFENSE

Detailed Report Predicts Millions
Would Die in Nuclear Conflict
Despite Major Program

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 19 — A Central Intelligence Agency report released today says that the Soviet Union has developed an active civil defense program for protecting its population in the event of nuclear attack, but that millions of its people would still be killed in the event of a major war with the United States.

The report does not draw any conclusion concerning Moscow's willingness or ability to attack the United States. It says the Soviet leaders believe that the civil defense program would improve the nation's ability to wage a war against the United States and would "enhance the Soviet Union's chances for survival following a nuclear exchange."

However, the study concludes, "They cannot have confidence in the degree of protection their civil defenses would give them." Consequently, the report goes on, the program is unlikely to embolden the Soviet leadership to risk a nuclear war.

Made Public by Senator Culver

The report was released by Senator John C. Culver, Democrat of Iowa, who is a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. The general conclusions of the C.I.A. study were reported previously by Adm. Stansfield Turner, the Director of Central Intelligence, in Congressional testimony made public in February.

The full study now released is the most comprehensive official assessment of Soviet civil defense yet made available to the public. Its release comes in the midst of a debate within the Government over whether the United States should attempt to match the Soviet civil-defense program. An interagency study is to be completed next month.

The United States has scaled down its effort over the last 15 years and now spends \$100 million to maintain shelters built in the early 1960's. Under a plan now under study in the Defense Department, \$4 billion would be spent over the next five years to improve procedures for evacuating large cities.

Two Views of U.S. Civil Defense

Supporters of a stronger program contend that it would reduce the chance that the Soviet Union might think of using nuclear arms during a severe crisis. Skeptics are concerned that a stronger program on both sides could make a nuclear war more likely by giving leaders the impression that it could be fought and won.

The C.I.A. report is unlikely to resolve the controversy, but it does contain details on the Soviet effort, estimated to cost \$2 million a year.

According to the report, the Soviet Union can provide shelters for "virtually all the leadership elements at all levels," or about 110,000 people. It also says that 12 to 24 percent of the total work force of key economic installations could be protected against nuclear attack.

Speed of Evacuation Is Critical

It says that a critical factor in determining whether large numbers of the population as a whole would survive is whether cities could be evacuated before a nuclear attack. According to the report, evacuations may take as long as a week for larger cities.

The report, analyzing a hypothetical American nuclear strike, concludes that "under worst conditions" more than 100 million deaths would result in the Soviet Union. Under the most favorable conditions, it says, civil defense could reduce casualties to "the low tens of millions."

In releasing the report, Senator Culver called for a review of American civil defense efforts "to see whether they can be improved and strengthened." However, he said the Soviet programs "were not enough to tip the strategic balance" and warned against starting a "crash program that would represent a radical change from our existing programs."